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<https://lavaca.agrilife.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/LavacaCounty4H>

Lavaca County 4-H News

Friday, October 24, 2025

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



Fun Fair was so much Fun!!

Bake Show Grand Champion – Emery Haas – Green Leaves

Bake Show Reserve Champion – Avery Knesek – Half Moon

Craft Show Grand and Reserve Champion – Ashlyn Pustka – Green Leaves

Chili Cook Off Top Team with Beans:

Vysehrad Clover Chili Cooks

Ava Shimek and Bella Howell

Chili Cook Off Top Team without Beans:

Lavaca River Oaks

Let's Go Brandon Cookers

Jaxson Roberts, Ryan Kalmus, Nolan Moran, and Ty Rother

Shout out to Jake Good – Half Moon for his Magic Trick Act in Talent Showcase.

Big Thanks to all of the adult and youth volunteers that made 4-H Fun Fair so much fun! We had 72 youth and 46 adults who signed in for a day filled with fun. Photos will be posted soon in the Flickr album. See the link below.

[Flickr Account](#)

In an effort to share event pictures with our members, Natalie has created a Flickr Account to store albums. As albums are created, the links to the specific albums will be shared either here in this newsletter or sent directly to participants. **The links are not to be shared with others outside of our organization and the photos are only for your personal download for use in record books and personal photo albums.** Social media does a great job of telling the 4-H story but **DO NOT** post the pictures from these albums **unless you have permission from all of the people in the photos.** We have many 4-H families who for various and valid reasons have declined the media release. Please respect their wishes.

The Flickr account is a trial run to see if it could possibly be used for our county photography contest.

Links to albums:

PSA's and National 4-H Week Proclamation: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/195841551@N06/KD035w3287>

Food and Nutrition Project Workshop: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/195841551@N06/k4m5680DV7>

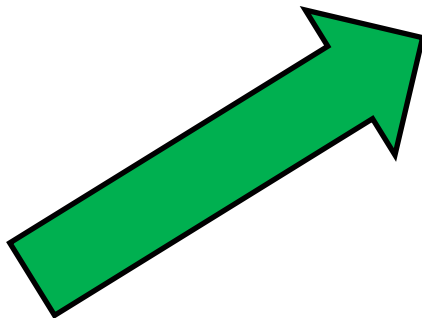
BBQ: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/195841551@N06/bdrE260ftR>

Big thanks to Sarah Collins for the BBQ photos!

Fun Fair: thank you to Sheila Henke and Sarah Collins for photographing the day! The photos haven't all been uploaded yet, but when they are you will be able to view them here: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/195841551@N06/N2p60cg230>

Thank you to our parents and other adult volunteers who have enrolled in 4-H online. All adults who are going to be involved in 4-H activities need to enroll in 4-H online. There are two training videos to watch that address our youth protection standards and 4-H rules. Please take the time to complete these. Your enrollment is not complete until the training videos are completed and the background screening is approved. If you have enrolled, you can check to make sure your enrollment is complete by looking to the right of your name in the family profile. If you have not yet enrolled, county council will pay the \$10 registration fee for adult volunteers who select pay by check.

Enrollment Fees increase to \$30 after October 31, 2025. If you have had your payment bounce back at you or if you paid by check and it is not received by the Texas 4-H program by the 31st, your fees will increase. You can check your member status next to your name in your profile. Email Natalie.knesek@ag.tamu.edu with questions.



2025-2026 Member Handbook (New QR Code)

We now have a Member Handbook that has lots of information for all members. We are not printing copies of these at the office. Instead, we hope you will use the QR code to scan it and save it somewhere that is useful to you. It displays well on a phone and can be saved to any digital device. If you picked up the QR Code that was handed out at Fun Fair, that code is no longer working. Please use the code above.

Livestock Validations and Orders

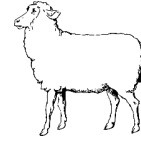
All Entries for Fort Worth Stock Show are due here by **October 31**

Shiner Junior Livestock Show

November 22, 2025

Kaspar Pavillion

Green Dickson Park



All Entries for Houston, Austin, San Antonio, San Angelo, and Elite are due here November 17.

This includes all contests (even non-animal) that take place at these shows.

Major show and HJLS Swine validation

November 11, 2025

Expo Center 4-6 pm and

November 13, 2025

Expo Center 4-5:30 pm



**HJLS halter heifers can be validated at any HJLS validation:
November 11, or November 13**

HJLS Entries Due December 1

Including \$10 entry fee and project record form



HJLS broiler distribution

December 12

Lavaca Expo Center

\$10 validation fee will be collected from each exhibitor at distribution

HJLS rabbit validation

December 16

Expo Center

5:00 – 6:00 p.



Quality Counts reminder:

All 4-H members **planning to show in a major show** must also have a current Quality Counts certificate. The test must be completed once in each age group Junior (3rd-5th grade), Intermediate (6th-8th grade) and Senior (9th -12th grade). Your Quality Counts number must be provided with your entry. Go to: <https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/quality-counts/01t4x000008HBZdAAO>



2025 County 4-H Food Show and Food Challenge Entry Form

This form is **due by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, October 27, 2025**

EMAIL: Natalie.knesek@ag.tamu.edu

Date Change

Contest: Saturday, November 1, 2025

Food Challenge will be held from 9:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Food Show will begin after lunch

Shiner Public School Cafeteria

A finalized schedule will be sent to participants once entries are received.

Name _____ Grade _____ Club _____

Email address _____

We will follow the District 11 Rules and Guidelines for County. Access the recipe form for food show and the rules and guidelines for both contests here: <https://d114-h.tamu.edu/events-and-contests/food-show-and-food-challenge/> and utilize the project resources to study and prepare for both contests on the state website at: <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/food-nutrition/>

Food Challenge: (teams that have both Juniors and Intermediates will compete as Intermediates. Senior teams may only have senior level members.)

☐ I plan to participate in food challenge. **All members must complete a form.**

Team Name:

Other Members on Team:

☐ I do not plan to participate in food challenge.

Food Show: (attach the required recipe form to this sheet)

☐ I plan to participate in food show and have attached my required recipe form.

☐ I do not plan to participate in food show.

I understand that I must be enrolled as an active member in Lavaca County 4-H and be academically eligible to participate in the county food show. I have the permission of my parent or guardian to participate and am responsible for arriving prepared.

Member Signature:

Parent Signature:

County Council
Monday, November 3
7:00 p.m.
Extension Office Conference Room

Opportunities You Don't Want to Miss !
Last Chance to register this Sunday!
Please email Natalie.Knesek@ag.tamu.edu
If you are going so she has time to register, too.



The poster for 'Spark! Light Up Luau' features a vibrant design with wavy blue and green lines at the top. Below the title, there are two circular images: one showing a group of people smiling and another showing a person in an orange shirt participating in an activity. A QR code with the text 'SCAN ME' is located in the bottom left corner. To the right of the images is a list of event details.

- Includes 4-H exploration, dancing, camp activities, and FUN!
- Hosted by Texas 4-H Council
- Camp for Junior & Intermediate 4-H Members
- November 7-9, 2025
- Held at Texas 4-H Center in Brownwood
- \$175 per participant
- Registration opened September 1st on the Texas 4-H Center website

At the bottom of the poster are the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension logo and a small illustration of palm trees and a person.

Spark!

Spark is a weekend Junior Leadership Lab hosted by the Texas 4-H State 4-H Council and held at the Texas 4-H Center at Lake Brownwood.

The '25-'26 Texas 4-H Council will host "Light Up Luau" November 7-9, 2025. Registration is \$175/participant and closes on Monday, October 26, 2025! So don't delay. Get registered today!!!!

Lavaca County 4-H Council will reimburse you ½ the fee with the correct paperwork submitted after attending, see the reimbursement policy.

We are also in needs of Chaperones for the event. Cost to chaperone is \$0. You will be housed in the dorm with the youth. Natalie will go, as well!

Click here for more information and for the registration link <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/spark/>

Texas 4-H Center

TEEN RETREAT

CAMP INTO THE NEW YEAR!

Jan. 2nd-4th \$175 Per Camper

FRESHMAN TO SENIORS IN HIGH SCHOOL

New year, new memories, and a whole lot of fun! Discover team building, leadership, and outdoor adventure through archery, kayaking, high ropes, and a color run!

REGISTRATION OPENS OCTOBER 9TH, 2025

Contact (325) 784-5482 makayla.waisereag.tamu.edu

SCAN TO REGISTER!

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

Natalie hopes to take a group and other adult chaperones are welcome. The County Reimbursement policy allows for ½ the participant fee and 100% adult chaperone fee to be reimbursed. This is an opportunity to get STATE LEVEL leadership project learning experience.

Let her know if you want to attend!

Texas 4-H Natural Resources Photography Contest

2025-2026

REGISTRATION
\$ 10/photo

Open to:
Any enrolled 4-H Member (Jr./Int./Sr.) or CEA/Program Assistant/Volunteer

Rules to be posted on Texas 4-H Natural Resources webpages
Contestant does not need to be active in a Natural Resources project area

Registration through 4HOnline:
Entries Open: December 1, 2025
Entries Close: December 15, 2025

****IMPORTANT****
Participants will upload photos in a separate system called Submittable. Instructions and a direct link will be provided during the 4HOnline registration process.

Purpose:
to encourage observation within specific 4-H Natural Resources project areas and allow youth to demonstrate skills learned in the area of photography.

Categories:
Aquatic Science / Entomology
Shooting Sports / Forestry
Sportfishing / Range Science
Hunting / Outdoor Education
Wildlife & Fisheries
Water Conservation & Education

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. <http://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/hr/diversity/equal-opportunity-educational-programs/>

Notice this is open to all three age groups and also has an adult division! You must be enrolled to enter.



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



PRAIRIE VIEW
A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program

4-H PUBLIC SPEAKING PROJECT GROUP



Third Thursday of the month
Kick off is Thursday, October 16th
@ 6:30 p.m.

Are you looking for opportunities to enhance the experiences of your public speaking project? Join this virtual 4-H group to meet with other youth to focus on learning more about public speaking.

IF YOU NEED ANY TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROGRAM OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PHYSICAL ACCESS PROVIDED, PLEASE CONTACT CORY HUNDL AT 979-321-5262 BY OCTOBER 10TH

CONTACT US



Email:

Cory.hundl@ag.tamu.edu



There were over 40 youth from all age groups who participated in the first statewide public speaking session on the 16th. This is the second year for this project group.

Use the QR code if you are interested in attending any of the future sessions. You do not have to participate in all but each month will be a little different.

Natalie will be on the call most months. The next session is on November 21.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating."

Club Meeting Information

- Hallettsville Town Rounders 4-H Club Meets 3rd Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Sheila Henke – 979-578-1585 Chris Henke – 979-578-1760
- Hope 4-H Club Meets 2nd Sunday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Hope Community Center CONTACT: Amy Jalufka – 361-772-0142 Lacy Mata – 361-648-5992 Erin Marshall – 830-857-5881
- Green Leaves 4-H Club Meets 3rd Sunday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Karen Janak – 361-798-6898
- Lavaca River Oaks 4-H Club Meets 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Clayton Wimberly – 361-293-8417
- Lucky H 4-H Club Meets 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Hall of Fame Room at the K.C. Hall – Hallettsville CONTACT: Brooke Meinkowsky – 361-772-4206
- Moulton 4-H Club Meets 3rd Wednesday of each month at 3:45 p.m. Zion Lutheran Church CONTACT: Claudia Gonzales – 979-777-5740 Robin Stewart – 618-340-5821
- Shiner 4-H club Meets 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Fire Station Meeting Room CONTACT: Lauren Bowman – 361-246-8015
- Half Moon 4-H Club Meets 2nd Sunday of each month at 6:00 p.m. United Lutheran Church of Shiner CONTACT: Stacy Miller – 512-413-8370 Jennifer Garcia – 512-878-7274
- Vysehrad 4-H Club Meets 3rd Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. St. Mary's Catholic Church Pavilion CONTACT: Sara Lynn Opela – 361-772-0722
- Sweet Home 4-H Club Meets 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Sweet Home Hall CONTACT: Christy Brosch – 361-772-7166
- Shooting Sports Project Group Meeting times vary Appelt's Hill Gun Club CONTACT: Phil Guenther – 979-562-2124

Having a club meeting, project group, or activity? Please designate one person, adult or youth over the age of 13, to complete the survey using the QR code each time you have a meeting. This is quick and can be done before you ever leave the meeting. **This helps us tell our story to those who help fund 4-H.**



Project Help and the People in the Office

Please help us in welcoming Lauren Loos to the County Extension Office. Lauren is training to be the office manager when Jennifer Steffek retires at the end of the year.

Jennifer Steffek has been the office manager for 25 years. She knows the ins and outs of everything. Do not hesitate to ask her your questions.

Natalie Knesek is the County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health and 4-H Coordinator for Lavaca County. She oversees the family and consumer sciences related activities, approves 4-H enrollments and registrations, oversees management of clubs and volunteers, and shares project responsibilities for STEM and Leadership/Citizenship with Shannon DeForest.

Shannon DeForest is the County Extension Agent -Ag and Natural Resources and oversees the projects related to both agriculture and natural resources including Shooting Sports.

Please do not hesitate to ask for help with your projects. If you go somewhere or do something 4-H related that does not require registration through 4-H online we often do not hear about it. Please be sure to tell us where you are going and what you are doing and let us know how we can support you.

Some Basic Information for our New Members

Lavaca County 4-H is part of District 11 4-H.

There are 12 districts in Texas 4-H. District 11 4-H includes:

Austin, Washington, Fayette, Wharton, Jackson, Lavaca, DeWitt, Karnes, Bee, Refugio, Goliad, San Patricio, Nueces, Aransas, Colorado, Victoria, Calhoun, and Matagorda Counties.

In 4-H we have three age divisions: Junior 3rd-5th grade (and at least 8 years of age)

Intermediate 6th-8th grade

High School 9th-12th grade (until 19 years of age)

We have educational opportunities for Clover Kids as well. Clover Kids are in K-2.

Natalie and Shannon have adjunct faculty agreements with all of the schools in Lavaca County enabling our youth to participate in events in accordance with UIL as extracurricular activities. In order to receive an excused absence you must have pre-approval and must meet your school's guidelines and have their approval. This process begins with your request in our office.

Attention High School Seniors!

Congratulations on reaching your senior year! You should have an email from Natalie in your inbox.

A few applications that you will want to start considering:

- Texas 4-H Opportunity Scholarship
- Lavaca County Extension Education Scholarship
- Texas Extension Education Association Scholarship (last year's recordbook required)
- Lavaca County 4-H (recordbooks from previous two years required)
- Go Texan

Details on each of these scholarships along with others that are shared with me will be sent to you as they become available.



Coastal Bend Classic

YOUTH AND LIVESTOCK CLINIC AND SHOWS

December 6, 2025

San Patricio County Fairgrounds, 219 W. 5th, Sinton, TX 78387

Schedule of Events:

Friday, December 5

3:00 - 8:00 PM

Early Arrival (optional)

Saturday, December 6

7:30 - 8:45 AM

Arrival and Stalling of Animals

8:45 AM

Weight Cards Due

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Species Clinics (beef, goat, sheep, swine)

1:00 PM

2025 JUDGES

Swine Judge - Austin Langemeier

Cattle Judge - Kirk Stierwalt

Goat Judge - Marty Gibbs

Lamb Judge - Caleb Knott

Lamb Clinician - Nathan Haws



First 100 youth participants pre-registered will receive a FREE T-SHIRT. Buckles will be awarded to the Grand Champion and the Reserve Grand Champion for each species.

Food Trucks will be Available

Species Showmanship followed by Species Shows (steer/heifer, goat, sheep, swine)

Register on Eventbrite by
scanning the QR code below:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-coatal-bend-classic-tickets-1782231675919?aff=oddtcreator>



Reminder About Fundraising

Clubs and 4-H project groups are required to submit the appropriate fundraising request form in advance of doing any fundraising on behalf of their local or county group. This helps us coordinate efforts and not conflict with others. We have many, many wonderful supporters of the 4-H program in Lavaca County and we want to make sure that we do not ask the same groups/businesses/etc. over and over. Please request the fundraising form from your club manager or Natalie.knesek@ag.tamu.edu. This needs to be approved prior to any fundraising efforts.

There are LOTS of opportunities that do not get included in this newsletter. Make sure you are **also reading the weekly email from Texas 4-H and following Texas 4-H on social media so you do not miss out. There is just more than we can possibly keep** up with and share. If you participate in something, please send us a picture or two and let us know what you learned and what you did so we can spotlight you in this newsletter or on our Facebook.

How to say the 4-H Motto and Pledge

Always begin with the motto by saying
"In support of the 4-H club motto, 'To make the best better'
I pledge my **HEAD** to clearer thinking,
My **HEART** to greater
loyalty, My **HANDS** to
larger service, and
My **HEALTH** to better living,
For my club, my community, my country, and my world."



The 4-H Prayer

"Help Me, O' Lord, to live so that the world may be a little
better because thou didst make me. Amen."

Reimbursement Policy

Our county council has funds designated to reimburse youth and adult chaperones who participate in events representing Lavaca County in District and State 4-H contests and leadership workshops. The policy and form to submit for reimbursement requests is available on our county website:

<https://lavaca.agrilife.org/files/2024/01/Lavaca-County-4-H-Reimbursement-Policy-and-Forms.pdf>